From: MZAHNER --VCH0021A Date and time 26.08.93 12:38:31
To: IBONNIER--VCH0021A Ingemo Bonnier

From: A.J. Andrade
Subject: Response to newspaper articles results of CDC study suggesting evidence of widespread exposure to ETS

SVENSKA DAGBLADET
DAM 27/8 1993

As promised, I have taken a closer look at your draft background paper and have taken the liberty of slightly revising it. You can consider the contents cleared for use in responding to further newspaper articles on the subject.

Please give me a call if you have any questions concerning my revisions.

Best regards,

A. J. Andrade

REVISED DRAFT

Svenska Dagbladet and the other dailies recently carried articles on how "passive smoking" is so widespread that cotinine, a substance formed in the body through the breakdown of nicotine, could be found in 99 per cent of Americans tested. These articles also stated that almost everyone is exposed to tobacco smoke and that "passive smoking" may be a more significant problem than previously thought. This information was take from an ongoing survey of the health and diet of Americans which is headed by the CDC, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

This information should be viewed extremely critically.

Nicotine is also found in the humble potato and tomato as they belong to the same family as the tobacco plant, the Solanacace family. This is also the case for the eggplant (aubergine) which is widely consumed in the USA if not in Sweden.

These are foods that are commonly eaten by virtually everyone often in fairly large quantities - not least in the shape of chips and ketchup. Ingestion of these common foods has been shown to result in measurable levels of nicotine, and its metabolite cotinine, in body fluids of non-smokers.

Furthermore, the survey itself is open to a great deal of criticism as the results that have been published are preliminary results (the survey is to continue for another five years and a total of 23,000 Americans are to be tested). The above mentioned results reporting traces of cotinine are derived from a small sample population of 800 individuals and other factors such as diet have not been taken into account.

The method of analysis used in the study has not bee verified. It was developed by the Centers for Disease Control and is brand new - as such it cannot be checked nor can it be assessed by any other neutral laboratory.

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The data which form the basis of the preliminary results have not been previously published - which is not usual practice according to the guidelines set out by the Association for American Chemists.

The method of analysis for cotinine content is extremely sensitive. Current measuring methods and equipment mean that even the smallest quantities of cotinine can be detected. Cotinine can originate from a number of dietary sources - a factor which has not been taken into account. Foods which are from the same family as the tobacco plant contain nicotine albeit in smaller amounts. Is it then not reasonable, and even probable, that the ultra sensitive measuring methods used have, in same instances, detected residual breakdown products of nicotine from potatoes for example ? Given the fact that virtually everybody's diet includes potatoes, tomatoes and other vegetables the question arises concerning the presence of cotinine. Is it because of diet or is it due to exposure to environmental tobacco smoke (ETS) ?

We should also bear in mind that another report constantly being referred to, the EPA report which classifies ETS as a "Group A carcinogen", is the subject of a legal challenge brought by the tobacco growers and the tobacco industry in the U.S. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency found it very difficult to interpret the meaningfulness of the population studies on ETS - so difficult in fact that the agency decided to change their rules of statistical evaluation during its drafting stage. 24 of the 30 population studies which formed the basis of the assessment reported no overall statistically significant increase in the risk for lung cancer among non-smokers reporting exposure to ETS.

By way of conclusion, it should also be mentioned that cotinine is biologically inactive and has never been associated with any health risk in any context.

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